

Lights and Shadows

Volume 37 *Lights and Shadows* Volume 37

Article 1

1-1-1993

Lights and Shadows 1993

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.una.edu/lightsandshadows>



Part of the [Art and Design Commons](#), and the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(1993). Lights and Shadows 1993. *Lights and Shadows*, 37 (1). Retrieved from <https://ir.una.edu/lightsandshadows/vol37/iss1/1>

This Full Issue is brought to you for free and open access by UNA Scholarly Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Lights and Shadows by an authorized editor of UNA Scholarly Repository. For more information, please contact jpate1@una.edu.

Lights & Shadows



1993

UNA Art/ Literary
Magazine

David Strachan
"Tattered"
Merit Award



1993
Lights & Shadows

ART/ LITERARY MAGAZINE
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA
Florence, Alabama 35632-0001

COLLIER LIBRARY
University of North Alabama
FLORENCE, ALABAMA

Contents

Short Stories / Fiction

- 25 CATALOGUE *Beth Borden*
30 BIRTHDAY PICTURE-AUGUST 16,1977 *Holly Austin*
34 BEACON *Beth Borden*
40 A VOICE IN THE NIGHT *Mikki LeFan*

Essays

- 5 SUMMER MONSTER *Tracy Osborn*
7 THREE WHEELS *Laura Gray*
13 CLICK CLICK CLICK . . . *Patricia Bryant Hartley*
18 STEALIE BOYS *Joy Kitchens*
45 IS THAT MY KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR *Bonnie Taylor*

Poetry

- 10 THIN MINTS *Laura Gray*
16 MAE JEAN *Dawn McCurley McInnish*
20 TOURWAY AT TWO A.M. *Tracy Osborn*
22 SECRETS *Alan May*
REPLY NEVER SENT *Alan May*
23 P.S. PLEASE WRITE SOON *Alan May*
28 KABUL *Philip Peterson*
KADDISH *Kenny Rickard*
29 SUPERMARKET *Laura Gray*
33 READING MEDEA *Tracy Osborn*
WHAT SHE THINKS *Mike Roberts*
37 LOST AND FOUND *Dawn McCurley McInnish*

- 38 KINDRED MUTABILITY *John Godwin*
- 39 THERE ARE GHOSTS *Tracy Osborn*
- 44 INSPIRATION *Joy Kitchens*

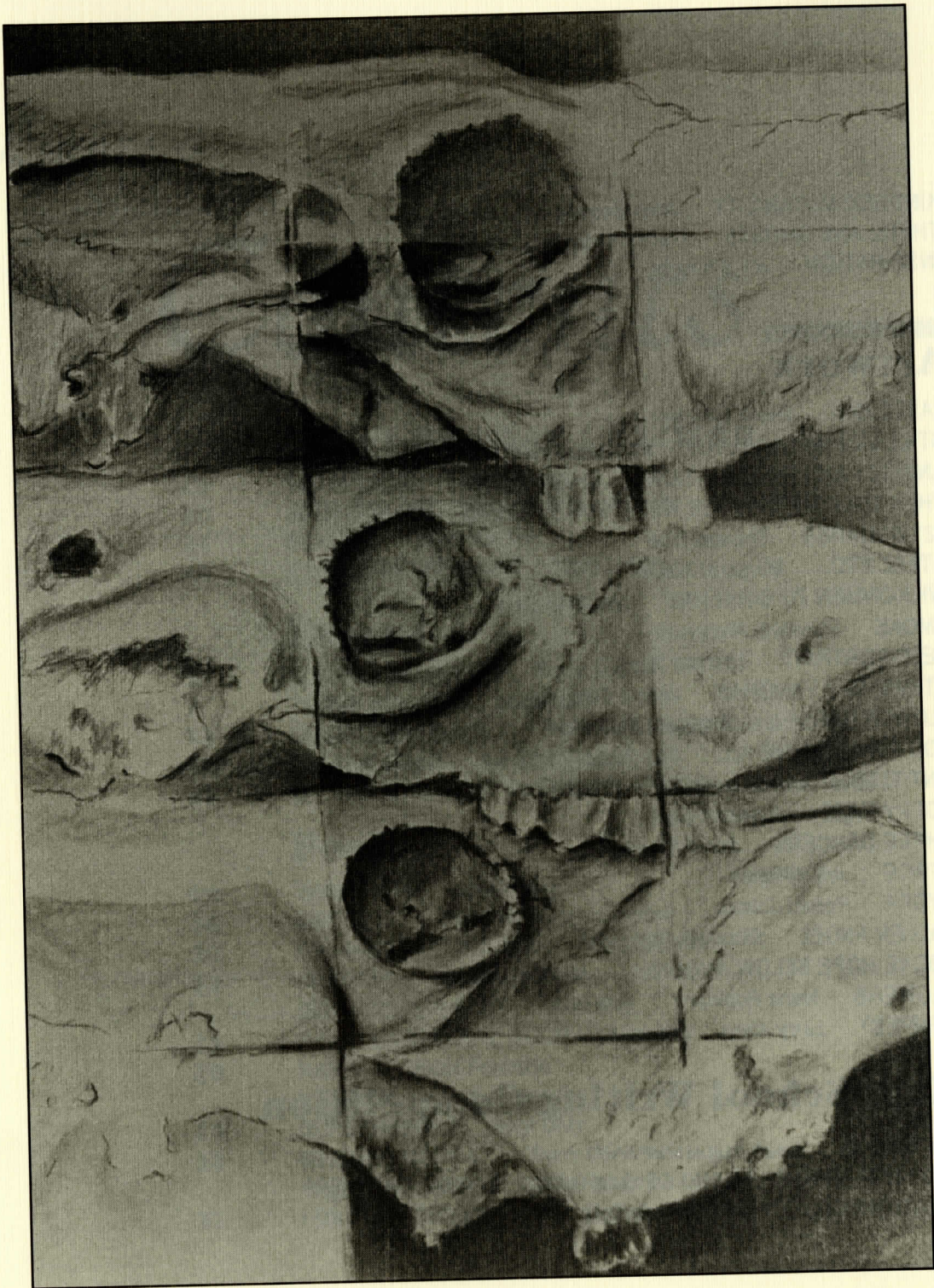
Artwork

Cover
& 1

- 4 STILL LIFE WITH SKULLS *Brentwood Reid*
- 6 ANXIETY AND FRUSTRATION *Larry Akers*
- 9 THEY TOLD ME MY EYES WERE SUNFLOWERS *Jonathan Cain*
- 11 121 SQUARES *Theresa Noe*
- 12 STEEL ETC. *Margaret Walter*
- 15 WILKOMMEN ZU BIRKENAU *Jonathan Cain*
- 17 SMOKE *Elizabeth Richcreek*
- 19 SELF-PORTRAIT *Theresa Noe*
- 21 STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN *Jeanie Compton*
- 23 FLOWER GARDEN *Elizabeth Richcreek*
- 24 YOU CAN CALL ME A.L. *Kay Rudisell*
- 28 UNTITLED *John Cahoon*
- 29 POPPY VASE *Jonathan Cain*
- 31 THREE DANCERS *Sandi Stevens*
- 32 SPACE *Jeff Williams*
- 33 HYDRA *Robert Grimes*
- 37 FALLEN ANGEL *Elizabeth Richcreek*
- 39 ABOVE HOPE BELOW ANGUISH *Jonathan Cain*
- 43 FLOWERS *Marie Robinson*
- 44 TEMPEST *Larry Akers*

High School Writing Competition

- 47 MY BRIDGE *Leah Augustine*
- 48 THE MYSTERIOUS LEGEND OF OAK RIDGE *Jessica Bowling*
- 51 DILATORY DEDUCTIONS *Lee Kent*



4 Lights & Shadows 1993

SUMMER MONSTERS

Informal Essay
Tracy Osborn

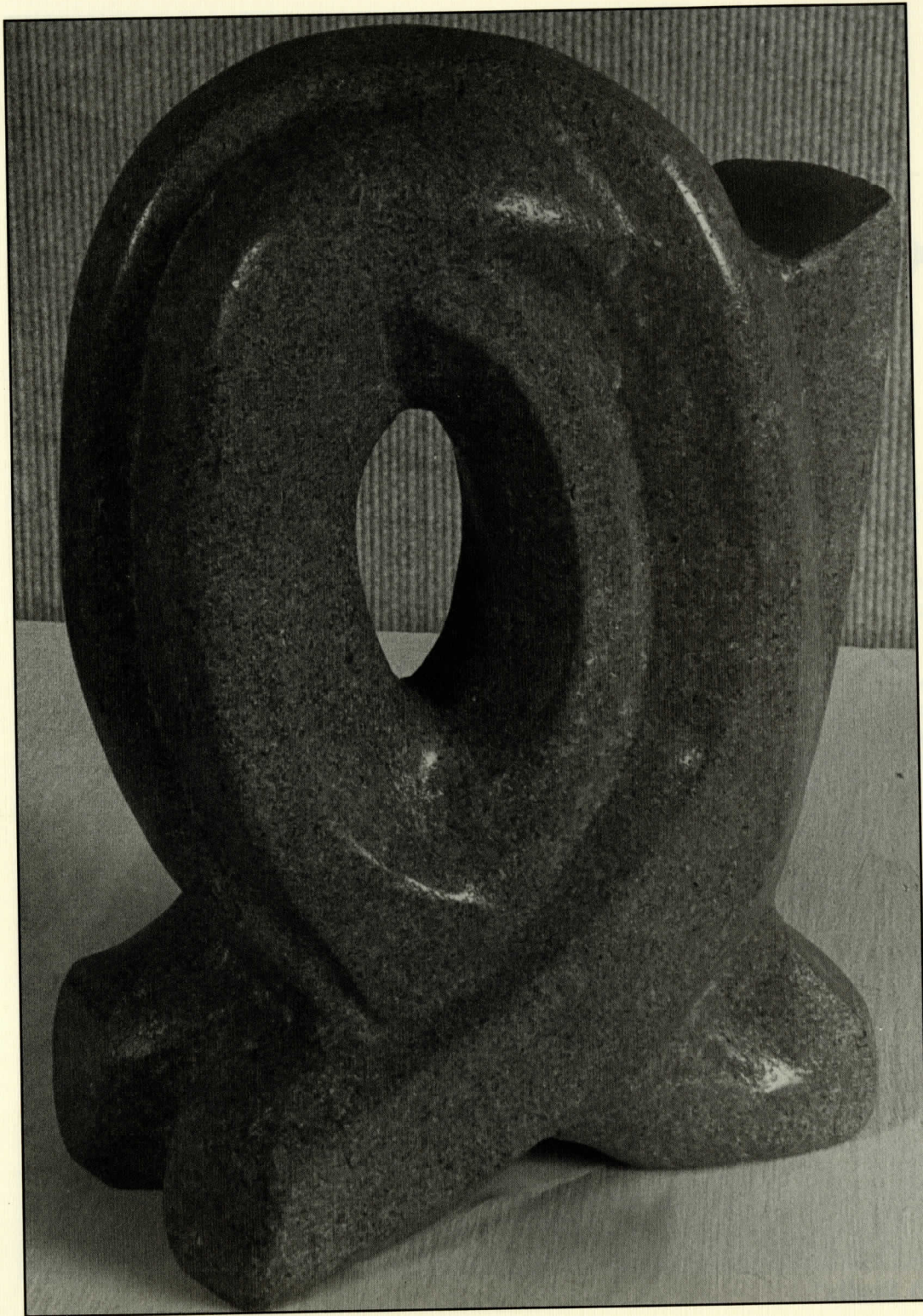
Summer nights swelter, hot as Momma's Martha Washington oven when the cornbread's on. The family gathers outside on the carport away from the house heat. Momma and Daddy sit in green and white webbed aluminum lawn chairs. They shell purple hull peas, staining their fingers bright lavender. I take the hulls and weave square play-plates for my doll friends. I grow bored with this quickly and begin to amuse myself by chasing lightning bugs around in the dew-wet yard. The grass tickles my bare brown feet. I imprison the glowing bugs in Mason jars and bring them back to my younger sisters to torture.

At true-dark, when all good little girls are already in bed, the toe-biter beetles march up onto the carport as if they own the place. We three girls show our respect to their proprietorship by promptly throwing hissy fits. Daddy is not amused. He tells us toe-biters can only catch mean girls who don't mind their parents. If we aren't good and go to bed, the toe-biters will grab onto our toes when we aren't looking and hang-on so tight we'll have to wear them the rest of our lives or have our toes cut off.

Inspired by Daddy's terrorist tactics, Mitchell, our older brother, immediately grabs up one of the creepy-crawly monsters and begins chasing us around in the carport. Daddy orders him to stop when the twins start bawling. At this point, we are all sentenced to our rooms and sleep-Mitchell, too, even though he's eighteen and considers himself a grown-up.

Even with no air conditioning or fans in the room the three of us girls share, it is never too hot to wear socks to bed or to pull the covers up over our legs-just in case. We know the monstrous beetle creatures are perfectly capable of clicking their pinchers after our chubby toes as we lay dreaming of running from their twenty-foot high shadows. In sleep, they come to avenge the fate of their lightning bug cousins.

Brentwood Reid
"Still Life with Skulls"
Merit Award
Charcoal



6 Lights & Shadows 1993

Three Wheels

■ *First Place Informal Essay*
Laura Gray

The model child, at least to Mom and Dad, is sitting beside me. Just like she is waiting for an interview for a position on the Presidential Cabinet. Upright and righteous. At least I'm driving, but that's just because I have the convertible. The top isn't even down. The point is that I have the option if I so choose. She knows that. I have won this small gloating right. Ashley has always been the butt kisser, golden child of the family. I, on the other hand have been the sheep of a darker color. Ashley never cut a hole in the den curtains at age 5. I did. Ashley never got caught trying to buy beer underage because the answering machine recorded the whole transaction. I did. Ashley never left a condom in the pocket of her jeans in junior high to be washed by mom. I did. But, I did get the convertible. I have done something right if only in a former life and I am the name carrier, the male child, son-maybe that's it. The car. But, I know it drives her crazy because she always wants me to drive and without fail she makes some comment about injustice and/or favoritism. It doesn't make any difference. I was caught for everything and she never did any wrong. I'm not bitter; I have the car.

But, after shoe prints on the wall, a scar on my upper lip from her knocking my tricycle over with me on it, and her nose

busted in K-mart when she was 9 and I was 7, we still ride in the car to go back to school. All the schools in the world and I pick (get a full scholarship with free room) the same college as my older sister. To top matters, I still get introduced as "Ashley's little brother." I had hoped that would end after high school.

The radio is blaring the Chillipeppers. Ashley turns it down for a second to interrupt with, "How much did you get?" I hate it when she adjusts my radio.

"Twenty bucks. What did you get?"

"Twenty. But you still have the convertible," she adds this laughing, but I appreciate the joke because she is serious.

"There it is," I think. I do have the car.

The radio goes back up until I think of Dad. I turn it down to joke with Ashley. There is an example of the communal bond -living with our dad. In Dad's best booming, authoritarian voice, the one he reserves for determining the future of his offspring, I chime in with some of his reverse child psychology. "Now when you get to school, just ask your sister. She can tell you. Things aren't going to be handed to you down there. They don't care if you don't go to class."

"Now listen to me. I'm just your old dad. I don't know anything," Ashley added.

We both cackle. His voice is in both our

Larry Akers
"Anxiety and Frustration"
Limestone

heads. I wonder sometimes if he realized what he was doing and as much as my dad would never admit it, I know he didn't have a clue.

"When we were little, do you remember building the book-toy chain after one of our fights? Mom would send us to our rooms. Then, we would tap on the wall in that code, and become friends against parental supervision and build a toy chain to connect our rooms down the hallway."

I do remember that. What logic. It's hard to still be able to make the mental links for our alibis. Like a toy chain kept us connected to our rooms.

"Yeah, we decided that as long as the stuff was touching both rooms, technically, we were still in confinement."

"I sometimes think that Mom's secret ambition was to be a psychologist. You know she used to hide our favorite toys after we had played with them for awhile so we wouldn't get bored."

"Probably read that in some magazine. She'll probably be like Auntie Joyce when we have kids." That really is a scary thought. Our Aunt Joyce always insisted on being called "auntie" and she took on the surrogate role of our maternal grandmother since my mom's mother died when Mom was 13. When you are a little kid and you've got this over-zealous, middle-aged woman with really bright orange lipstick coming at you all puckered up-running isn't a 'big boy' option-what can you do? Ashley and I definitely have the shared-experience bond. Auntie Joyce ran after her, too.

"What about the three wheeler incident?"

The three wheeler incident. She always brings that up. These little trips down memory lane always lead to a damned ride on the three wheeler. She has her own version of this story probably out of guilt. I never listen; I was there. I was the one who got the toenail cut off by a tree. She who never did deal well with pain, hers or anyone else's, never has gotten over the three wheeler incident.

"What about it? I was the one who got my toenail cut off on the tree. You weren't hurt."

"The reason you got your toenail cut off is because you were..."

"Turning around to spit and we started going for the tree and you turned us to save the day and I jerked it back around. I know. Then, we hit the tree. History."

"You never listen. You have always blamed me for hitting the tree."

"Did you lose a toenail in this incident?"

"No, but I didn't have to spit."

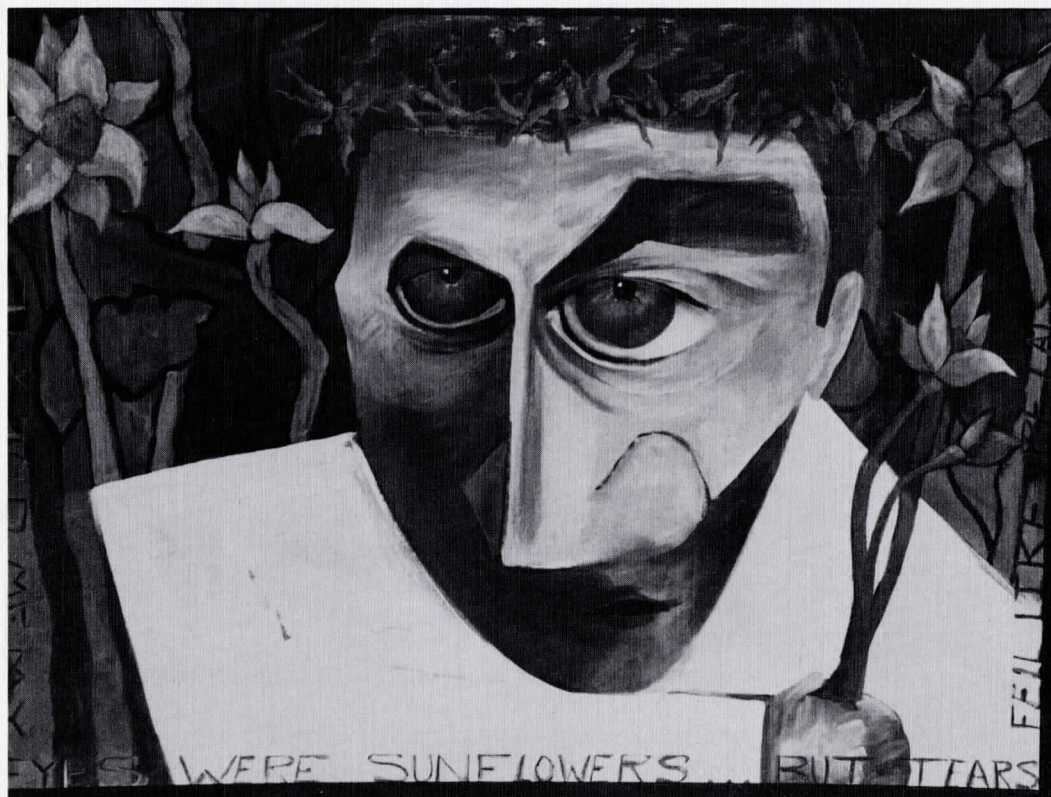
I knew the three wheeler incident would come up again. She mourned the loss of my toenail more than I, and I remember how pale she got when she looked at my foot just after we pulled back from the tree.

She was quiet for a second and I was concentrating on the road pretending not to notice. We were coming into a sharp turn in the highway. I was going fast. Real fast. Out of the corner of my eye, I could see Ashley wrap her hand around the door handle. She was waiting to see what I was going to do with the accelerator before she said anything. She was also probably still feeling guilty about the toenail and so I got a few milliseconds longer before she would

start. I suppose the toenail incident could make her a little uneasy about me having control of the wheel. I took a quick view of the landscape just off the shoulder. No trees. A few more milliseconds just for fun and then I slowed down. I did not want to hear a statistic about speed, death, and traffic, nor did I care about the other half of the wreck-risk being beyond my control because of the other drivers on the road. She probably knew at least one gory fact

that she had been saving for Mustang convertibles alone. And spitting. She could tie this in too, just to make a point. I didn't care to hear it. Besides, the last time I spit was on the three wheeler that day of the lost toenail, age 12. Spitting lost something after that.

Ashley released the door handle without a single statistic coming out. I was impressed. And she turned back up the Chillipeppers. ■



Jonathan Cain
**"They Told Me My Eyes
Were Sunflowers"**
Campus Bookstore Award

Thin Mints

First Place Poetry
Laura Gray

I had the same dream last night the one
I've had before, the one about my aunt's icebox

the empty lime sherbet container and frozen
mints, lots of frozen mints.

No corn or green beans, only a small iced-over
container with cool old lady candies and concessions.

The self same aunt that I haven't seen since
she made the announcement that she no longer had any

brothers and sisters. She's very dramatic, my aunt.
I can understand.

She is an oldest child. I am an oldest child.
Her son adopted a baby with dark almond eyes

and shining roundness named after her but she
is discontent because a name is not much connection.

She suspects we do not accept this child.
The self same person who took care of granddad

like a novelty and then grew tired and wished
for a grandbaby girl and grew tired of her, too.

I wonder what she wanted when she was seventeen.
A boy with a Valiant with red leather seats and a radio.

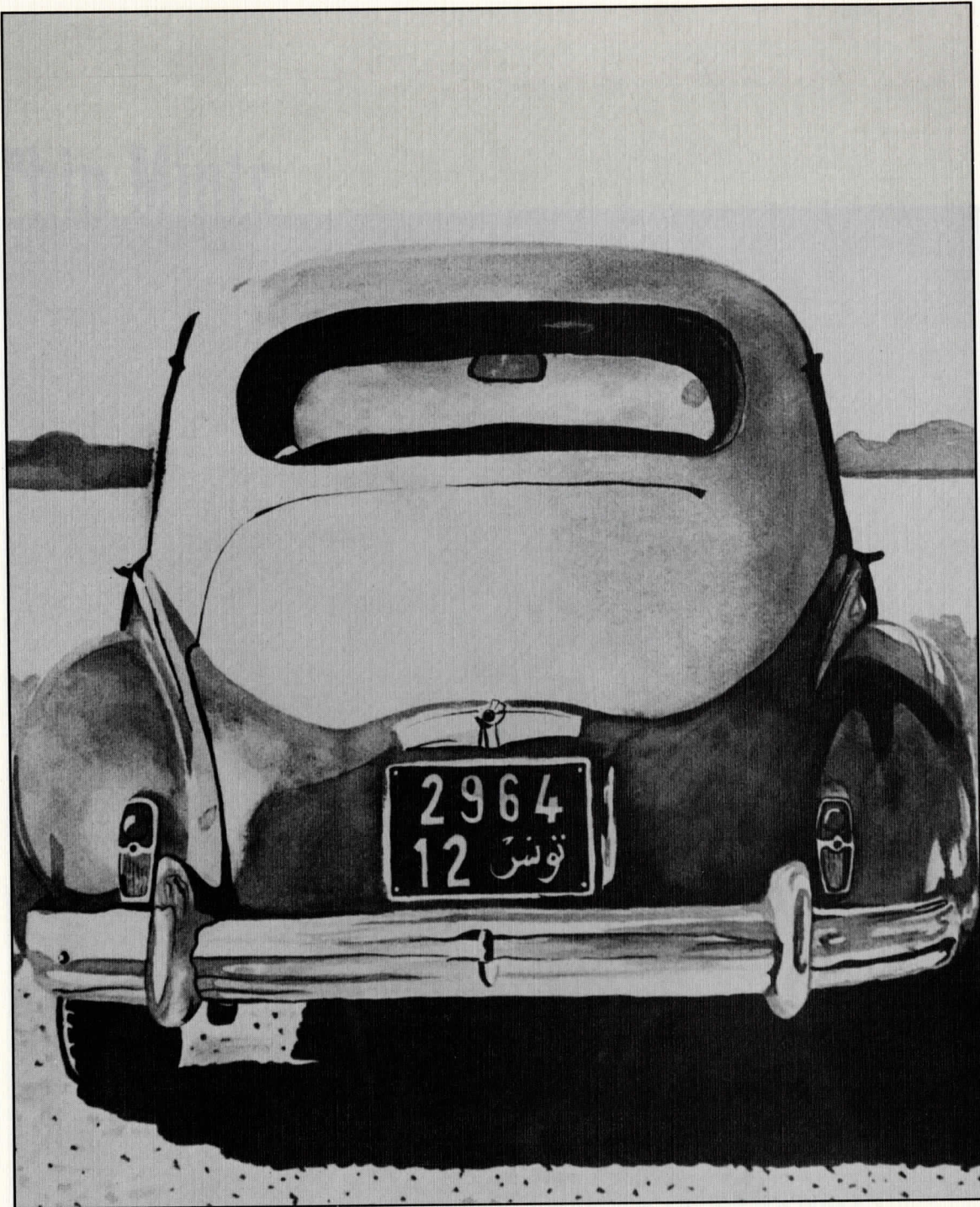
The dream is always the same.
I search her small icebox, knowing she is nowhere

around, masses of Persian cat hair sitting beside me.
I open a box of frozen thin mints,

breaking the seal of cellophane, I take one
on my tongue, hoping she will not notice.



Theresa Noe
"121 Squares"
First Place 2-D B & W
Pen & Ink



12 Lights & Shadows 1993

Margaret Walter
"Steel Etc."
Merit Award
Ink Wash

Click Click Click . . .

≡ Second Place Informal Essay

Patricia Bryant Hartley

The “click-click” noise emanating from under the hood of my 1984 Ford Thunderbird had grown increasingly louder even as the engine lost power. That summer, I had taken on a third job at a bait shop to save money for school in the fall, but even that extra income would not be enough to have the noise checked out at a dealership. So I began asking friends, coworkers, and even customers of the bait shop to listen to the noise and give their best opinion of what could be causing it.

“It’s your turbocharger. Never should have bought one of them turbocharged Fords. They’re all pieces of ...” said one man, who had the saying “I’d rather push a Chevy than drive a Ford” imprinted on his dirty blue cap.

“You need some oil in that thing. My wife never put any oil in her car and it sounded just like that before the motor blew up out on Highway 43...” said another man.

“See this thing here? That’s your trouble. Yep, that’s it...” said yet another contributor, pointing to the radiator.

I listened intently to everyone, adding oil, fuel injector cleaner and water as it was suggested. But the “click-click” soon turned into a “click-click-click”, and I decided that if the noise got any louder I would break down and take the car to the dealership for repairs.

Then one night as I was closing the bait shop a man clad in greasy coveralls came in to pay for the gas he had just pumped. He had two dirty patches sewn on his chest—one said “Jerry” and the other—the one that caught my eye—said “Miller’s Auto Service” in cursive letters. As a last effort, I once again asked for advice on my car’s ailment.

“Sure, I’ll look at it,” he said amicably. Before we even lifted the hood he told me that he suspected the camshaft was making the noise. As the engine “click-clicked” into life, he nodded, as if confirming his hypothesis.

“How much do you want for it?” he asked.

Sell the car? I hadn’t thought of that. I had been having a lot of problems with it in the past few months, and I expected more. When I told him I would have to think about it, he gave me the address of Miller’s Auto Service and told me to come by. I was there by noon the next day, with a price that I had calculated after a quick call to the bank. I found Jerry, and immediately he eased the car into one of the

bays and hooked the motor up to several impressive-looking machines. After only a few minutes he informed me that the problem was indeed the camshaft, but that at this early stage he could fix it after he bought it more easily and at a cost that was cheaper than he would charge me to fix it.

"Looks good. What do you want for it?" he asked, and I gave him my price-just enough for the payoff on the loan. He nodded in agreement, and asked if he could test drive it.

That was when I made my big mistake-I said, "Sure."

As we drove through the residential neighborhood beside the service station, I explained all of the interior features to the future owner of my car. Then without warning, Jerry's foot mashed the gas pedal to the floor, a move that usually would have resulted in screeching tires and sent the car squealing down the road. But in its delicate condition, the shock was devastating. A shudder moved through the Thunderbird, and it slowed to a crawl. The depressed gas pedal had little more effect than causing a horrible clacking sound in the motor.

"What the hell did you do to my car?" I screamed at the mechanic. "You can't do that!"

"Do what? I didn't do anything!" he said defensively. It was then that I realized that I had been had. This so-called mechanic had ruined my only transportation and any chance of selling it. And I was certain that he was not going to admit his fault or attempt to fix it. I was right.

The tears I cried as I drove home that day at little over 10 miles per hour did not help me. None of the phone calls or visits to Miller's Auto Service helped either. And eventually, I was assured by a lawyer friend of a friend that I had no legal recourse, since I had agreed to the test drive and had no written agreements or contracts on the sale of the car.

After two months and two car payments on a car that was sitting useless in front of my house, I finally decided to take matters into my own hands. I was smart-well, in school at least-so surely I could figure out a simple car motor. After all, a college degree wasn't required to become an auto mechanic. I began asking for advice again on what the culprit was and learned that the camshaft needed to be replaced. When I asked the same people how to do this, I was deluged with explanations, books, and even crude diagrams sketched on paper bags. Eventually, I gained an elementary knowledge of how my car's engine worked, and what parts must have been defective. I spent hours under the hood of my car, tracing the paths of wires and hoses, trying to figure out the easiest way to replace the camshaft.

I arranged to buy the needed parts on installment payments through a local dealership for wholesale price through a manager for whom my mother baby-sat. Then on the next sunny Saturday, I woke early, and set about removing all the parts of the engine that were covering the camshaft, labeling everything with tape so that I could put it back where it belonged. I encountered a few obstructions in

removing the camshaft, but I just took extra time to work around them. After all, I wasn't charging myself by the hour.

Near dusk, covered in grease and unknown engine fluids, I slammed the car's hood triumphantly. A turn of the key proved that I had connected all of the parts correctly. I drove around the block at full power and heard no strange "click-clicking" for the first time in months. I had replaced eight rocker arms for the cost of replacing just one.

Six months later, the car suffered irreparable damage, and I had to sell it. I never saw Jerry again—Miller's Auto Service closed not long after I was there. I guess I owe him, though, because if he hadn't ruined my car, I would have never discovered that I had a little bit of motor oil in my blood!

Jonathan Cain
"Wilkommen Zu Birkenau"
Best of Show



Mae Jean

Third Place Poetry

Dawn McCurley McInnish

She is petite
but somehow tall
as she walks to the post office
wearing red lipstick
and red nails.

Her hat is old
and not nearly as fancy
as the ones
in the closet at home.
She holds a cigarette
in one hand
with an elegance acquired
by years of practice.

Self-proclaimed old maid,
she says she wouldn't
know a penis if she saw one,
but that's not what
the people say.

Times were when Mae Jean
put on a hat
and heels
and rode the bus to Birmingham.
Times were when Mae Jean
had many men
and many proposals
and many other things
to do with her life
besides get married.

Even now
there are the men
who come for supper and go without
rumor or scandal.
The mayor, the sheriff,
the mailman.

Each one says
how good the potatoes are,
but each one thinks
"If only she were young again."
And so does she.



Elizabeth Richcreek
"Smoke"
Merit Award

Stealie Boys

— Third Place Informal Essay
Joy Kitchens

I was twenty-two when my husband, Ben, who was in the Army, volunteered to go to Okinawa for a year. We knew it would be a great opportunity to see more of the world. We left Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in our Volkswagen square-backed station wagon with our three-week-old baby daughter, Kaki, and traveled across America stopping to visit his parents and my parents in Mississippi on the way to his sister's apartment in Balboa, California.

As far as the Army was concerned, Ben's tour in Okinawa was to be unaccompanied, which meant that if Kaki and I went with him, he would have to pay our way.

The Army flew Ben to Okinawa. Kaki and I stayed at Ben's sister's apartment and visited with Ben's relatives a week or two until Ben could find us a place to live.

He found us an upstairs apartment in a predominantly American neighborhood in one of the newer two-story buildings in Futenma.

Kaki and I flew to Okinawa and moved into our apartment. In our building, ours was the first apartment as we came up the open stairwell. An Army sergeant lived with his Okinawan wife and child downstairs, and a Filipino businessman lived by himself in the apartment next door to ours on the second floor. The walkway past our door extended past the Filipino's apartment onto a roof terrace where we could

view the activities of the community. I was especially fascinated to watch the children at the local school across the street playing their games on the school playground. The children all seemed trim and physically fit. The Okinawan boy students all wore uniforms-black pants, white shirts, black ties and black caps. The girls all wore black pleated skirts and white blouses. We could see the Pacific Ocean in the distance to the east from our apartment building.

Our one-bedroom apartment contained three rooms. The front room served as kitchen, dining room and living room. Off from the front room was a large bathroom-almost as large as the front room. The back room was our bedroom.

By the time Kaki and I arrived, our car which had been shipped by the Army had arrived also. We all three would explore the island together when Ben did not have to work. On our trips, we had noticed the young Okinawan men who wore sunglasses all the time, even at night. I thought they were just trying to be super-cool. Our new friends informed us that they were stealie boys. They wore the dark glasses to train their eyes so that they could be able to see well in the dark, an invaluable skill for their profession of burglary. None of our friends had ever heard of one of them using a weapon or harming anyone, but the stealie boys were known to prey on the American

servicemen stationed on the island.

However, we felt secure enough. Our apartment had locks on the windows and our front door had a bar lock and a chain lock in addition to the regular doorknob lock.

On payday night, though, one of the stealie boys intruded while we were asleep. He had already sneaked past the end of the bed where we were asleep, and stolen Ben's billfold from our chest of drawers, and slipped back into the front room before I was awakened by the sound of someone rummaging through my purse, a sound I easily recognized.

I elbowed Ben.

"What?"

"Someone is in the next room rummaging through my purse." I whispered.

He listened carefully for a moment. Being a fearless Green Beret, he decided to try to frighten the intruder away. He leaped up and yelled, "Aieeee!" as he rammed his bare foot through the clear, plastic sewing kit I had left at the foot of the bed.

We heard footsteps scampering out the front room and down the exterior stairwell. Ben dashed out in his underwear to see if he could catch a glimpse of the stealie boy. He was not fast enough. We heard the dogs barking for miles as the stealie boy scurried through the town, further and further away.

We were lucky; Ben had not picked up his paycheck that day. However, the stealie boy did get Ben's driver's license. There might have been a market for American i.d.'s then. The Vietnam War was going full force.

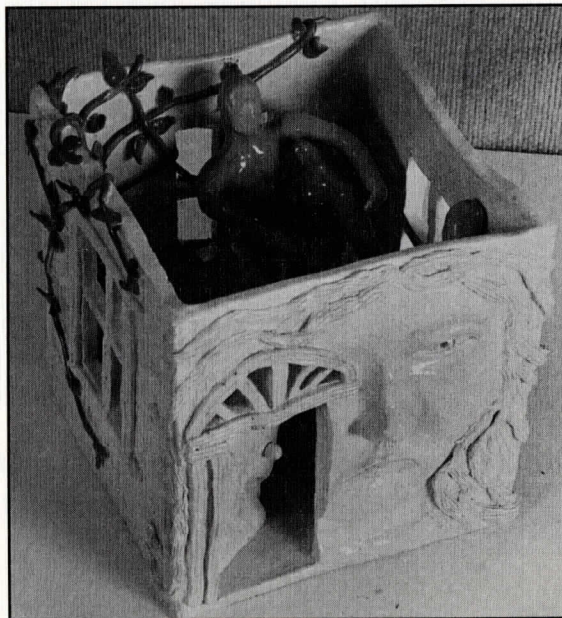
That night, the military police came to investigate the burglary. We were all amazed at how easily the stealie boy had come through the three locks, sprung the spring on the screen door, propped the

door open with my iron, and crept into our bedroom without our hearing him.

The next day, our Okinawan landlord put steel bars on all our windows and a deadbolt lock on our door.

As far as I know, the burglar was never caught.

For the rest of our stay on Okinawa, we slept behind bars. The nights were long and eerie, especially when Ben would have to go to the Philippines on civic action missions for weeks at a time. I would go to sleep straining to hear the sounds of someone surreptitiously trying to enter our apartment. Sometimes in the middle of the night I would have a nightmare in which I would be convinced that someone was in the room where Kaki and I were asleep. I would wake up to the choked sounds of my own voice trying to scream. ■



Theresa Noe
"Self- Portrait"
Merit Award

Tourway at Two A.M.

Third Place Poetry
Tracy Osborn

*I come hungry for images. I take them in, ingest them, like the early
bird specials disappearing from a dozen diners' plates.*

*College students, inspired by too much late night coffee, pseudo-study.
Not real java—hot Havoline, poured in to oil the joints.*

*Cigarette smokes rises, like nervous signals made by natives,
lifts up, and is sliced by circling ceiling fan blades.*

*Police radio static grates on caffeine-reinforced nerves. Cops uniformed,
in booths, swap dirty jokes as coffee, unloved, grows cold.*

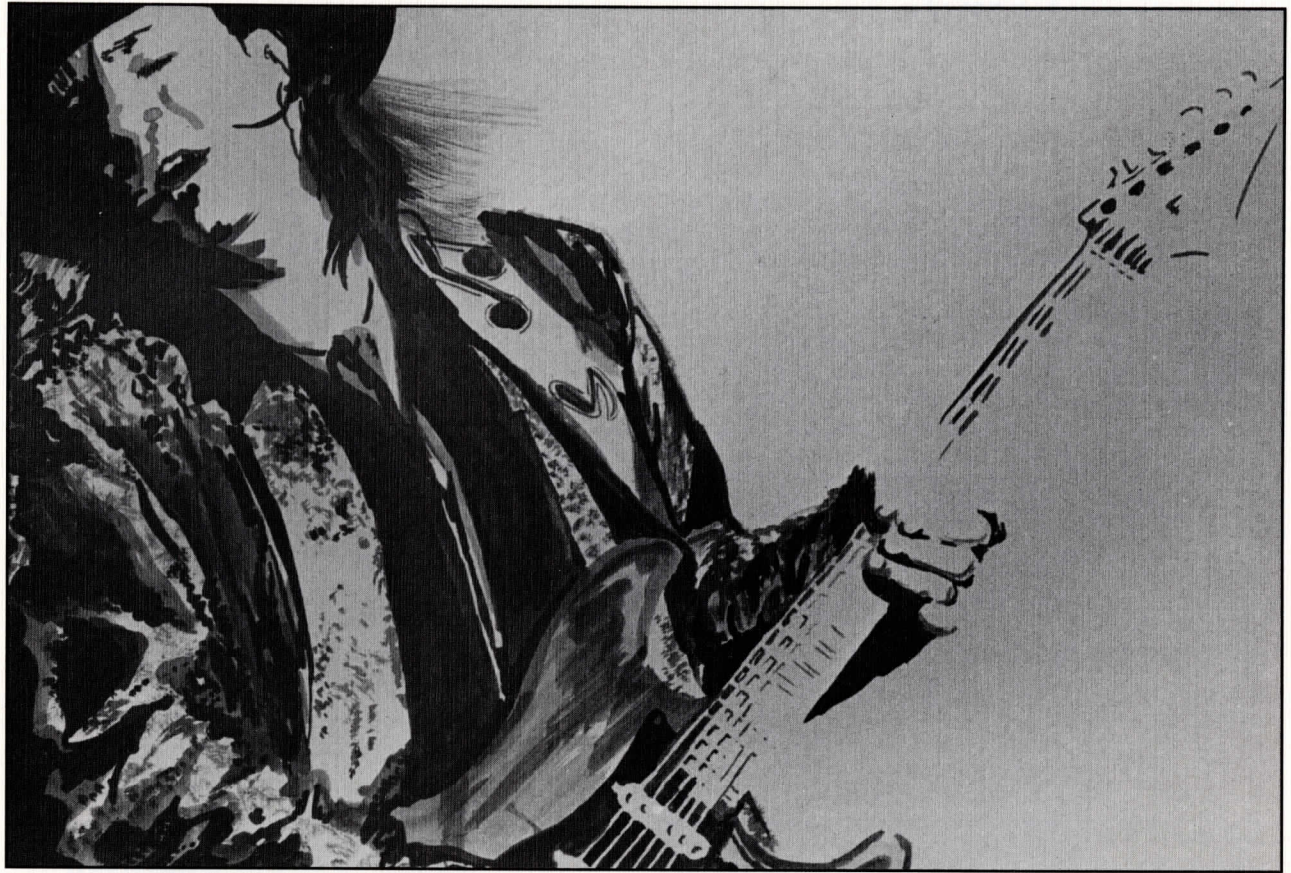
*Hard-living men and used-up women, aging honky-tonkers, sober up to
musik.*

An older ladies' man at the next table eyes the women as they pass by.

*His unbuttoned shirt is opened to reveal a shark tooth necklace
gleaming from amid graying chest hairs.*

*A couple prepares to leave, checking for new arrivals in the parking lot.
She exits first. He hangs back, then follows. No one will know.*

*Betty Rose returns to refill my neglected mug. "Regular or decaf, hon?"
"Regular," I say. We're all regulars here at two a.m.*



Jeanie Compton
"Stevie Ray Vaughan"
Second Place 2-D B & W

Secrets

by Alan May

Before we were men
we rode bicycles in the snow,

braking to slide
with the rush of momentum,

our hands frozen
firm around rubber grips.

Before we were men
we were everything but ourselves;

warriors in the trees,
astronauts on the wooden swing

painted green, rocking dangerously,
and then at night

I felt your warmth
and your still, strong arms

hiding tears. As fears grew
and the screams crescendoed,

we were wrapped in each other
before we were men.

Reply Never Sent

by Alan May

Yes, I
do think
of you
occasionally
as:

a big, ugly
dog
who's
peed on
the rug
one
time too
many
and yet,
still
doesn't
get
the biting
wind
or the
rolled up
newspaper;

a character
played by
Chaney
in the
opening scene
as
you take
my
mother's hand
in black
and
white;

a frightened
child
trapped between
the noise
and lights
of a
busy
intersection.

p.s. Please write soon

by Alan May

I've moved in and it's
all that I wanted.

The sky blue paint chips,
the shrubs are ten feet

high and they hang their shadows
on my door. I burn matches.

until the flames touch my fingers.

There is marshmallow cream on
the couch, candle wax

on the floor, and occasionally,
I walk at angles

through the house looking
for keys, books, my wallet.

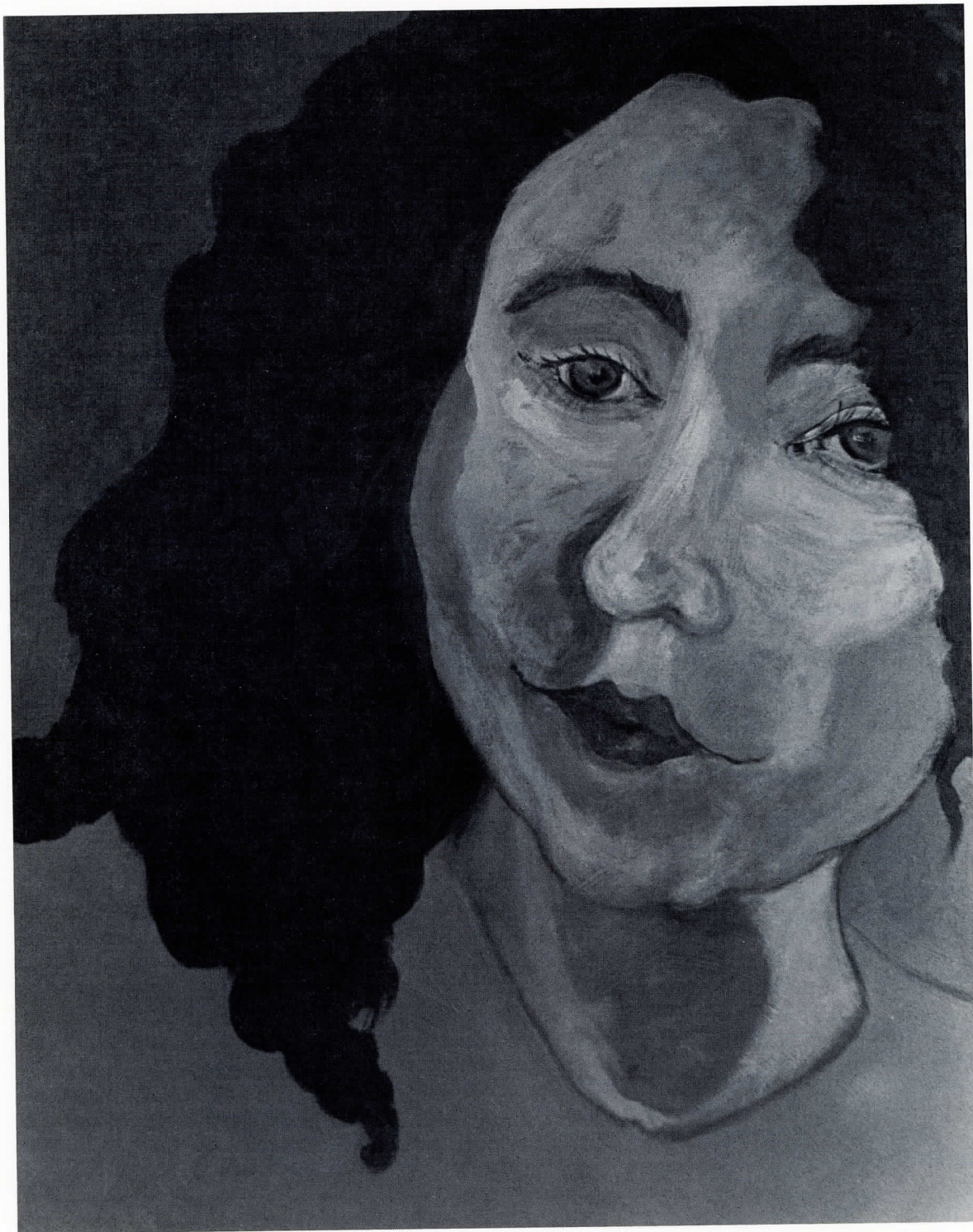
Other than that, I'm happy
here on Cherry Street, though

I can never remember when the
garbage man comes and

my box outside overflows with mail
addressed to someone else.



Elizabeth Richcreek
"Flower Garden"
Merit Award, 3-D
Ceramics



24 Lights & Shadows 1993

Catalogue

— Fiction by Beth Borden

She woke to the sound of a crying baby. It was Morgan, and it was 3 a.m. They say teething is hard on everyone, and right now she believed it. This was the third night in a row Morgan had been up at 3. She got up slowly from the bed, rubbing the sleep from her eyes. It took her a minute or two to wake up. She staggered down the narrow hallway of the trailer and into the baby's room.

There wasn't much to Morgan's room, a secondhand baby bed and dresser and some stuffed animal toys she had gotten at the shower, but she had done as much as she could with the money he had given her. She ignored the mismatched furniture and moved over to the baby. Cradling the child in her arms, she settled in the rocker her Grandmother Borden had left her when she passed away. He had laughed at her when she showed him the beautifully matched Jenny Lind bedroom suite for the baby's room out of the Sears catalog.

"Who do you think is gonna pay for all that fancy stuff? Not me, that's for sure. I got better things to spend my money on. Besides, she won't know the difference."

Life had been hard for Becky. James had proposed when she was only 17, and she had accepted. He got her a tiny diamond solitaire, all he could afford, and they got engaged despite her parent's objections. She was old enough to make her own decisions now. She was an adult-or so James kept telling her. She never thought of what she would be giving up. He had taken a job in a local factory right out of high school, and when she graduated a year later, they were married. He was making close to \$7 an hour now, which barely covered the bills they got daily in the mail.

She had had dreams of going to college and having a career, but he was so jealous that college was out of the question. Besides, women who got an education thought they were better than everyone else, according to him. They thought they had to have all this fancy stuff and a brand new car. She didn't need all of that. He would provide for her.

"Think you're too good for me?" he'd say, taking another swig of Jim Beam. "Well, you ain't. So don't go gettin' any ideas in that head of yours. If I didn't want you around, nobody would. You hear me? You're nothin'. You're lucky I even let you stay here with me."

Kay Rudisell

"You Can Call Me A.L."

She had become numb from his demeaning sermons. What's worse, she had even started to believe what he said. She was nothing. She had finished high school, but that was all. She didn't have a career; he wouldn't let her have a job. She might cheat on him or something. She looked hard at herself in the mirror standing up against the wall; it still hadn't been hung after she had taken it out of the cardboard. Her once petite frame was now chubby from the baby. Her hips bulged out, and her clothes didn't seem to fit like they once had. The lines around her eyes revealed countless worries and late-night fights complete with bruises and tears. He made her wear cheap makeup, not the expensive designer kind she had worn in high school.

"Aw, you don't need that fancy stuff. It's too expensive. Besides, all that stuff is the same anyway." She resented him greatly for taking away her way of life. Her long brown hair was now speckled with remnants of stray gray hairs.

"Go back home to your Daddy," he'd say in disgust. "I don't give a damn what you do. But you ain't taking my truck, and you ain't takin' my baby."

Hot tears would stream down her cheeks as she gave up in desperation. She was trapped here. Morgan was everything to her. It was the only reason she stayed with him. She had gone home once when he was in one of his drunken fits, threatening her. She had packed up what little she had, took Morgan and rode with a friend home to her parents' house. But he came after her. The police had to be called, and James and her daddy had gotten into a fight. After a couple of days of separation, he had called her crying saying he couldn't live without her and the baby and how much he loved her. He talked her into coming home. Her daddy was silent as he drove her and Morgan back to the trailer. Tears welled up in his eyes as he let her out of the truck. She went back thinking things would change and, at the same time, knowing they wouldn't.

Times had been tough for them. Everyone said they wouldn't make it. But they had showed everyone, even though their phone had been disconnected and the power had been turned off twice because of delinquent payments.

What little money they did have he blew on the weekends in bars. She couldn't even leave the trailer without him, and yet he hit the bars every weekend without her. If she went along, she might get ideas in her head and want a better life with someone else. That would also mean he would have to buy twice as many beers, and they couldn't afford that. It all made sense to him. And besides, he hated a woman who didn't appreciate what she had.

He had pawned her wedding ring months ago to buy himself a new rifle. It was deer season, and what else was a man to do? He needed a gun and she didn't need a ring. A ring was useless, a luxury. With a gun, he could put food on the table, although most of his hunting trips turned out to be fruitless.

"Oh, hell, quit your cryin'," he said flippantly. "It was just a dumb old ring. Grow up! Everybody has to give up things in life. Just look at what all I've given up for you, and for what? Shut up, I said!"

She rocked Morgan in the rocker, thinking of her parents as the clock hands turned to 4 a.m. She never got to see anybody anymore, not even her mother. The last time she had even talked to her mother was about three months ago. Her mother had tried to talk her into leaving him.

"Come home. You and Morgan can live here. I'll get you a little job at the hospital and you and Morgan can stay with me and your Daddy. Please stay. You look worse every time I see you. We love you, you know we do," she had pleaded.

But she had returned to the little trailer out in the middle of nowhere. He had let her use his truck for the first time since Morgan was born. She had wanted to let her parents see the baby, and he had agreed. But she was late coming home, and he was drunk. She took the cussing of her life for it too. He badgered her into confessing that she had almost stayed with her mother.

"She put those ideas into your head, didn't she? Answer me! Well, that's all right, you'll not be going there again. You hear me! And if I even find out you been talkin' to her again, I'll kill you! You got that?"

She hated him for separating her from her parents. That was the worst thing he could have done to her. They offered to pay for her college if she would go. But James wouldn't have that. He sold the car her daddy had given her to buy the secondhand trailer they lived in now. When they offered to lend her a car to go to school in, he got her pregnant and demanded that she stay home with the baby.

The 6:30 alarm woke her from her thoughts. She put the baby back in her bed. Time to make breakfast for James and get him ready for work. He hated it when she made him late.

Kabul

by Philip Peterson

Kabul is soft in the springtime-
Gentle wisps of curly smoke
accompany incense's alluring odor,
long ago.

in the meantime. . . .

Gaunt figures jingle
on the ends of long strings-
While rapt spectators gawk
at the puppet show in progress.

Allah Akbar!
Allah Akbar!



Kaddish

by Kenny Rickard

John Cahoon
"Untitled"
Mixed Media

Words on the page,
are paper serpents, coiled to strike.

Words from the heart,
are doves freed from a cage.

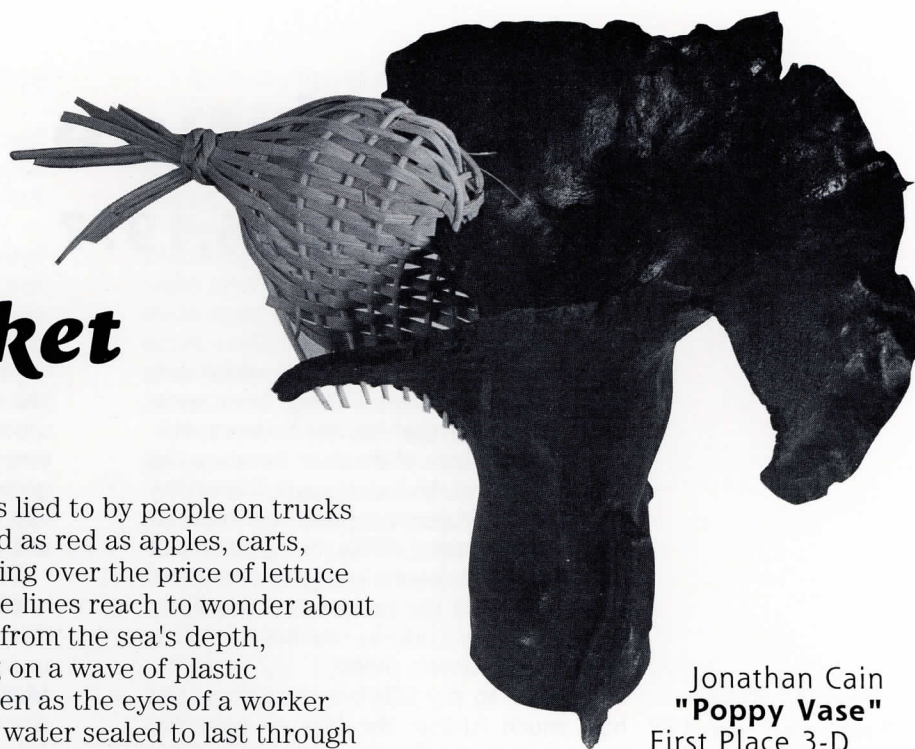
Words from careless lips,
are ghosts searching for a home.

Use words carefully,
they are parcels from the soul.

Supermarket

Second Place Poetry
Laura Gray

super tomatoes asparagus bananas lied to by people on trucks
we'll never know. Tricycles painted as red as apples, carts,
lipstick on the old woman squinching over the price of lettuce
hands dripping diamonds, cigarette lines reach to wonder about
tea in China, horned fruit pilfered from the sea's depth,
tottering, little orange fish floating on a wave of plastic
radiation television dinner pea green as the eyes of a worker
desolate in the aisles amid cans of water sealed to last through
a holocaust, flood, outdoor campout without a can opener. And,
bachelors with jackets tied around their necks in colors of
blush, embarrassed and brazen. Desperate at the fate of the
world, religion, and the increase in beef prices, a lady with
a child scans the chicken. The butcher behind the counter smears
blood across his apron and shifts his weight waiting for her
to decide. Inattentive, she asks him to slice up a turkey-ham -
extra thin, deli. Lunch. Rescue comes to aisle 7 to save an
embarrassed boy and a jar of concord grape jam. Dizzying aroma
of yeast rises to find the tragedy spilled across the surface
like an ocean stained crimson with oil. First job high schoolers
with faces shiny as milk containers slide their partners thin
and elegant in a waltz down rows of recycled steel wallflowers
as a black and white movie would roll across a big screen
collecting dust balls as big as ravioli and Liz Taylor grows
impatient at the checkout waiting for her story to change, her
picture to fade, her face to be young again, and the old woman
with red lipstick rolls to the Express line pushing 11 items.



Jonathan Cain
"Poppy Vase"
First Place 3-D

Birthday Picture

--August 16, 1977

= by Holly Austin

Sunlight shines through the white curtain sheers and forms a long, boxy spotlight on the green, white, and brown speckled linoleum floor of the den. Between the box of light and the baseboards, I lie on my stomach, shoulders propped with one elbow and a forearm. With the open end of a bobby-pin, I trace the irregular circles and intersections of the grooves on the floor, subconsciously clicking my heels in slow rhythm with time's silence.

I glance to my side occasionally to see how much further the box of light has moved across the floor. It's getting closer to the opposite baseboard.

Irritated by the uneven lengths of the bobby-pins legs, I bend them apart and continue mapping the floor with the zig-zagged side of the pin. I pretend the white spots are lakes, the brown spots are deserts, and the green areas are meadows and forests. The grooves are trails—made by the Indians who hide in the dark green forests. I've wandered away from my family's campsite on the Great White Lake beside my wrist. I must follow the paths from lake to lake and back to the camp without touching the forests where the Indians will get me. At my aid are scraps of orange crayon that I used the last time I was lost. Mother had scrubbed away my trail and, the next afternoon, gave me a color-

ing book that didn't even have pictures—just numbers with dots beside them. She showed me how it works, so when I got to three, I looked at her page to see where to go next. My picture didn't look anything like her beautiful star. "Maybe this book will be more fun later," she said.

The box of light is now rising up the wall.

Moments later I hear keys jingling and the living room door opening with an unusually quick creak. I don't believe it is Mother—then I hear her talking to the sitter and saying goodbye. Any other day I'd have met her at the door.

"Peggy Jane Deaton! Get up before...," I'm standing before she can finish. "I knew I should have told Eloise to have you ready! Okay, come one. Let's get you dressed—we're running late!"

"But I don't want to!"

"P.J., we discussed this last night. We don't have time to argue now! It'll only take a few minutes and it will be over, OK?"

"But .."

Already she is too far away to hear my protest. I dart toward my bedroom, hoping to stop her but finding that I'm too late. There she stands in my doorway, still as a scarecrow; in one hand the yellow dress she had pressed last night and hung outside my closet door, in the other hand lacey white socks and black patent shoes. Dangling

from her mouth is a barrette with a yellow bow.

"Don't pout," she says between clinched teeth. "I know what. We'll make it a quick game of beauty shop." She raises her black eyebrows, waiting for agreement.

The backs of my legs stick to the hot vinyl seats of Mother's beige '72 Ford. The smell of her V05 hairspray and Oil of Olay layer with the heat like heavy blankets. Olan Mills seems a million miles away.

"Let's have some air before you get all sweaty," she says, and the hot then cold air blows away my fantasy, replacing it with dread. "And how about some music? Oh, listen! 'Don't Go Breakin' My Heart.' You like this song, don't ya, Peg? P.J.?" She turns and looks at me.

"Peggy! Why are you crying?" She turns onto a side road and puts the car in park. "Answer me! Look, you're messing up your pretty little face. Now, tell me what's wrong."

She digs into her purse for a Kleenex and starts wiping my face. "You've never cried when you've had your picture made before. Now, tell me why you're crying."

She lowers the volume on the radio and I look down at my hands and tell her.

"WHAT? You don't know how to SMILE?"

I shake my head and keep looking down.

"Oh, come on! You smile all the time. You know how!"

"Not in pictures."

"Yes, you do. In all your pictures. Pictures and smiles galore! And you have a pretty smile."

"But I forgot how."

"Well, look, I'll show you."

She smiles, all right, but it doesn't look easy.

"Now, you try."

I force my lips to move a bit.

"Good try, but show your teeth. See."

"Why do I have to show my teeth?" That looks impossible to me; I don't see how she does it.

"Because that's a truly happy smile. Keep practicing while I drive." She turns up the radio and takes off, getting back onto a main road that passes the funeral home, occasionally looking to see if I'm practicing and flashing her pretty, wide difficult smile at me.

At the instant we ride by the funeral home, the music on the radio stops.

"We interrupt this broadcast to bring you an important news bulletin."

Mother turns up the volume.

"Elvis Presley was found dead today..."

"Oh, no!" says Mother.

"What?" I ask.

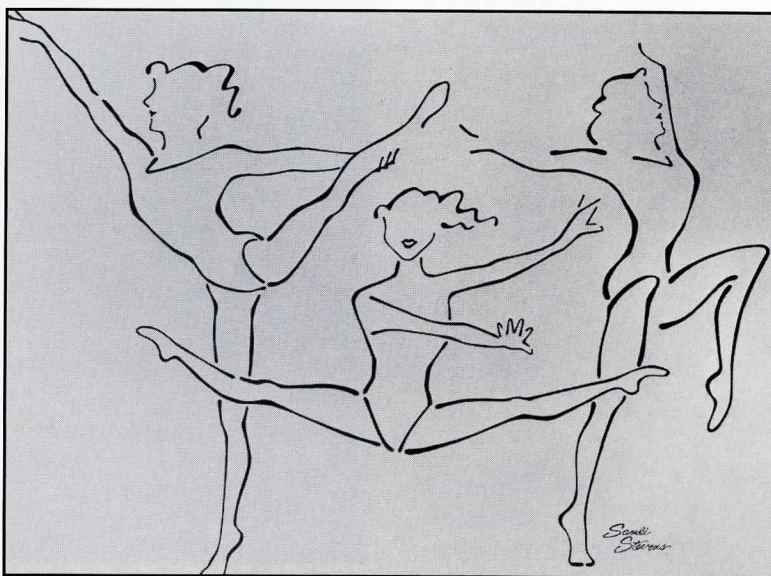
"Shh!" We listen.

"I can't believe this!"

"Who's Elvis?"

"Elvis Presley is the King of Rock and

Sandi Stevens
"Three Dancers"
Merit Award



Roll. He died today. I don't believe it!"

She looks like she's going to cry. Suddenly, I remember the name. It was on a Bazooka bubble gum wrapper that my older brother had once—some joke about a hound dog. He laughed and laughed at the punch line, then he laughed at me because I didn't get it. "You don't know who Elvis Presley is?" He laughed but still wouldn't tell me.

Mother's nose is red like Rudolph's. I hate it when she looks like that. "Momma, don't cry."

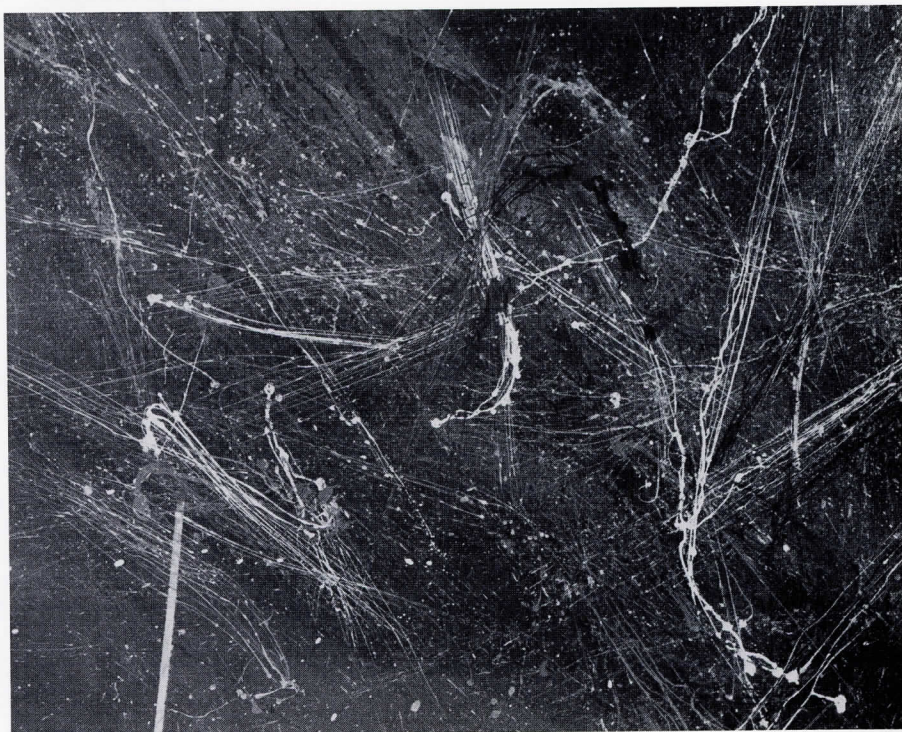
"I'm OK," she says. "Let's keep practicing."

She drives on, and her big toothy smile

looks more strained than ever beneath her Rudolph nose and pink, watery eyes.

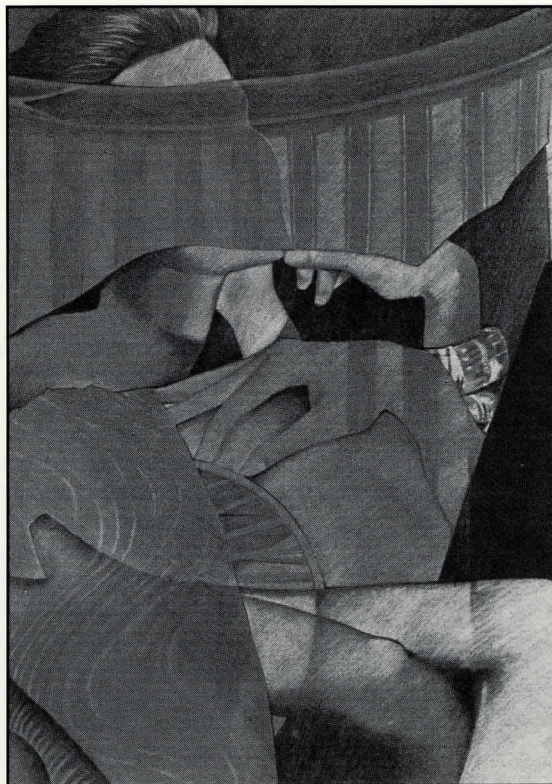
At the studio, his name is mentioned in every conversation. Mother tells one lady about the time he came to the Sheffield Community Center in a pink Cadillac convertible, and how she walked all the way in her black poodle skirt and pink sweater to see him. "My friends in Chicago had never even heard of him then," she laughs.

Seated on the small velvet stool and facing the camera, I've long forgotten that I don't know how to smile. The photographer disappears beneath the black sheet. With the flash, I blink my eyes.



Jeff Williams
"Space"
First Place 2-D Color

Robert Grimes
"Hydra"



Reading Medea

Poetry by Tracy Osborn

The slats of the wooden park bench
stab into my back — familiar feeling.
—Medea, tragic heroine: ruled by emotion,
cursed by Fate, betrayed by Jason—

She has my sympathy, this too feeling woman.
Beneath the shell of heroism, her love's heart
too typically male.

But that's only an opinion.
I could be prejudiced against
the man. Treachery is not
limited to the legendary.

Back in the park, lovers walk by
hand-in-hand. I marvel at their
mindless bravery.

Which one will be the deceiver?
One lover always loves more—
it's only human nature.

What She Thinks

Poetry by Mike Roberts

She thinks it's O-Kay
to be late.
She thinks it's fine
to not return calls.
She thinks it's acceptable
to snub friends.
She thinks it's normal
to stand people up.
She thinks the world revolves
around her.
Who does she think
she is?
"Typical" female;
I think!

Beacon

— by Beth Borden

If you take Lauderdale County Road #10 off the Natchez Trace, you'll go through a small, rural nameless community. Cotton and soybeans are the main occupations of the locals. Cotton pickers, big, scary green monsters, snatch the cotton right off of the stem, leaving a brown bare skeleton as a marker.

The roads are narrow, barely two lanes, and there are no lines to govern lanes. They are usually filled with tractors and trucks pulling wagons filled with snow drifts this time of year. These trucks and their trailers take up nearly the whole road pulling their loads of cotton and don't have taillights or signal lights of any kind. They slowly make their way to the cotton gin.

About 10 miles off the Trace stands the Church. It's not on the main road, but you can see it from the road. It's a white building with stained glass and green roof with a light that always burns. It looks like a typical, old one-room church where the congregation sits restlessly on white wooden benches, chasing wasps around the ceiling with their eyes while the preacher, probably Southern Baptist, preaches a fire and brimstone sermon. Outside, huge oaks surround the Church. In the fall, their naked branches dance in the wind casting demon shadows onto the ground. Rain or shine, snow or fog, that one light shines like a beacon in the dark night to all who pass the quaint one-room church.

I passed there one night. It was a cold night-not many cars on the road. There was a slight drizzle, not enough for wipers-too much without wipers- just enough to mess up your windshield. The overcast sky threatened a wintry mix.

I was traveling home from school, Christmas music keeping me company. The car sputtered at first, then all power left it. I struggled to steer the dead car off the road. No one was within ten miles of me. It was awfully cold. If I stayed with the car, I might freeze to death before someone came. If I set out walking, would I be an easy target for some maniac waiting down the road? I could just imagine the headlines: "Unknown Girl Found Dead in Woods, Cause of Death-Chainsaw." "It's a shame," one old man would say, "everybody knows better 'en to travel by foot along after dark around these parts." Then he would begin spinning a tale about the hitchhiker, seen on this very road ten years ago to that day, who disappeared and was never heard from again.

The more I thought about it, the more it became a frightening reality to me. If I saw a car on the road, did I really want it to stop? Did I really not want it to stop?

Would the driver be an escaped convict with the silver bracelets still dangling from his wrists? I knew one thing for sure—I didn't want to be just another pretty face plastered on the back of a milk carton. "Why didn't I just stay at the Church?" I thought in desperation.

I turned to face the distant light of the Church gleaming in the mist. I could see that the Church wasn't that far away, so I decided I'd try it (Bravery isn't one of my strong points). I reluctantly buttoned up my heavy winter coat and started towards the light. The wind whistled as it blew across the open rows of the planting. The tall pines creaked in the distance from the chilly breeze. There was no movement out on the open fields except for a few stray leaves drifting through the rows. I jumped at every noise I heard. I kept telling myself—just a little farther to the Church, not much more. Just keep going, I thought. As the cold wind seeped through my clothes, my walk quickened. My face was stinging from the cold wind and my eyes began to water. I pulled my coat a little closer to my body. I kept looking back at my car. I wondered if it would be okay there by itself. I wondered if the escaped convict running loose would have it stripped and violated and sitting on blocks when I returned. It sat there, alone, vulnerable, afraid.

I walked on towards the Church. Leaves rustled in the wind. As I approached, the bare hands of the big oaks reached out. I dodged them and walked up to the doors. They were locked. I eased around to the back of the Church and found an open back door beneath the light. It was as if someone had left it open for me. The wind blew the door shut behind me as if in anger.

It was really frightening inside that old church. The light of the beacon shining through the stained glass windows made the room a collage of color. The empty pews looked frightening. I looked around. Behind the pulpit was an almost life-size picture of Jesus with his arms outstretched, beckoning me, and any other stray sheep, to his side. On the offering table in front of the pulpit was a huge brass cross and two offering plates on either side. The candles were not lit. The place looked dead. The oaks tapped against the stained-glass windows.

I took my place on the front bench and flipped through a hymnal. Jesus Loves Me, Standing on the Promises, Just As I Am—I went through them all, singing a few out-of-tune bars of each. Only Jesus himself could have mercy on a voice like mine. I didn't usually sing out loud when I went to church, but tonight I did. It's comforting to know that He gave me some other gift in its place (whatever that might be).

It was starting to get late, 12:30 to be exact, and I was tired and cold. I had recited some passages from the back of the hymnal, including the marriage ceremony, and tried to pick out some of the tunes on the old piano. But the lighting was too bad and the piano was as out of tune as my voice was. I was trying desperately to stay awake. Don't they say that you drift off to sleep right before you freeze to death, or is that carbon monoxide poisoning? I couldn't remember: my mind was too cloudy to think right now and I was too cold.

Just as I caught myself nodding off into hypothermia, I heard something. It sounded like a car door shutting. I looked at my watch. I couldn't tell but it looked to be about 1:00 a.m. or so. What would someone be doing at this secluded old church at 1 in the morning (well, aside from me)? Then, I heard the front doors rattle. Oh, God! They've come to get me! It's Bubba and Billy Joe, the two escaped convicts, coming to get me. I jumped under my pew in lightning speed just as the front doors flew open. All I could see were two pairs of rubber boots, but I heard the voices.

"Yessiree, better wrap those pipes up. May be a hard freeze tonight. Weatherman's forecasting snow flurries."

"'Course I coulda told him that a week ago, ya know. My arthritis' been killin' me."

"Did you and ya boy kill anything Saturday? I hear Jerry found some tracks out towards Bobby Ray's old barn."

"Naw, but we saw a nice doe. Boy, was she a pretty thing. She was just taking her own sweet time. She stayed right under our tree stand for a good 10 minutes I know."

I slowly eased up in front of the bench to take a look at the boots' owners. Two old men carrying flashlights walked on in the sanctuary. As I was easing back down, I brushed the hymnal with my hand. It slid off the bench into the floor.

"Mother Mary, sweet Jesus! What was that? Who's there? Come on out whoever you are."

I stood up real slow-like with my hands up.

"Don't shoot. It's just me; I'm not armed."

I explained my situation to the two old men and they gave me a ride to a house with a phone. They were really quite nice. One even told me that he had a daughter named Elizabeth, like me, that I reminded him of. We sat around his kitchen table talking and drinking coffee until the wrecker showed up.

I guess that was the highlight of my evening, the Church, I mean, and the two old men, except for the wrecker ride home at 2:30 a.m. with a guy named Harold (but he said I could call him Bubba) and his assistant Billy Joe.

Elizabeth Richcreek
"Fallen Angel"
Second- Place 2-D color



Lost and Found

by Dawn McCurley McInnish

3:45 p.m.
a young girl dies
in a one car one telephone pole
accident
on the rainslick blacktop
of highway 72
must have been going pretty fast
says a state trooper
she never knew what hit her

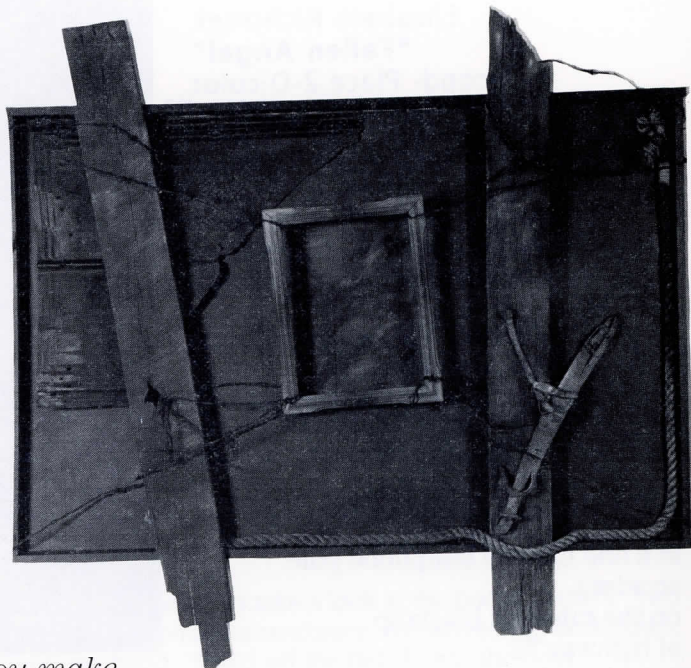
4:30 p.m.
a betty crocker mother
answers the door
to a death knoll
you'll be happy to know
she died instantly
says the sheriff's deputy
she didn't suffer
he says

5:15 p.m.
parents meet at the morgue
to claim their daughter
a cheerleader who was
on her way to a volleyball game
where classmates cry
as the principal makes an announcement
and one close friend falls limp and is
carried home

8:00 p.m.
family and friends
arrive at the wounded home
bearing casseroles and chicken
feed a sorrow starve
a cold
but the mother doesn't eat
doesn't see
except to search for the missing

7:30 a.m.
a general patton mother
makes calls makes arrangements
makes believe
that all this will pass
later she makes lunch from left-
overs
and finds her daughter
in a card taped to the refrigerator.

David Strachan
"Portrait"
Merit Award, 3-D
Mixed Media



Kindred Mutability

by John Godwin

*Change is not really change
It's only moving one step closer
To your destiny.
Every thought, action, and decision you make
is already woven on the web of fate.
Everyone believes their destiny to be
Success at life.
But what is life, but just time
And what is time, but just man's invention
And if time is man's invention
Has man merely invented his destiny
By acknowledging himself and his vanity?
And whether your destiny be success or failure,
You have lived and learned.
You have changed your views
Or conformed your whole life away.
You lose your mind and die,
Wondering about it all.*

There Are Ghosts

by Tracy Osborn

on the Natchez Trace.

You cannot see them
if you look.

They show themselves
to the corners of your eyes
or in the red glare of taillights
as you brake to turn.

At marker 329
there is a persistent haunt.
He walks, head down, dejected,
long hair trailing down his back.

White man's whiskey
made him this ghost.
He cannot soar with the spirits
of his ancestors.

He must walk, forever lost,
away from Natchez.

Jonathan Cain
"Above Hope Below Anguish"
Second Place 3-D



A Voice in the Night ---

= Fiction
by Mikki LeFan

"What will she be like?" Blake Millhouse drove carefully down the unfamiliar highway. He breathed a sigh of relief as he signaled a right turn, then coasted to a stop at the end of a parking lot. After a fifteen-minute silent debate, he put his sunglasses on, and got out of the car. The brilliant afternoon sun glittered against the steel at his right hip and the gold on his upper left chest. His night stick knocked gently against his thigh as he slowly walked toward the entrance of the building.

The door opened with a high-pitched "pong." A musical, slightly Southern voice called, "I'll be out in just a minute. I've got my hands in Clorox."

"No hurry," he replied, thinking that he did not recognize the young woman's voice. Maybe it *wasn't* her. He began to wander around, trying to control his shaking heart.

The first aisle was a dieter's nightmare: on one side were candy bars, candy and gum of every possible flavor; on the other side, all sorts of cakes, cookies and potato chips overflowed the shelves. The next aisle held better fare; soups, sandwich spreads, and various types of crackers.

Everything a person needed for a good late-night snack.

Blake glanced toward the cash register. The owner of the voice that greeted him was still absent from view. Maybe it *was* her. As he moved around the small convenience store, pretending to look for something in particular, one question echoed in his mind: would he regret meeting her? This same question had preyed upon his thoughts ever since the night six months ago a certain sweet, low, sultry sound appeared over the airwaves of his car radio.

Every evening, from eight o'clock until dawn, her hypnotizing voice gave him directions, supplied him with information, and sometimes sent him into deadly situations.

Until that night, he had dreaded working his graveyard shift. The loneliness and darkness of working alone had turned inward on him even more. He had always thought of himself as the strong, silent type, but in only a little over a year, the strength had given way to desolation and despair.

Now, he came on duty with relish be-

cause he knew she would be there to guide him. His soul had a reason for living and maybe even for loving. That single, solitary voice was his lifeline, figuratively and literally. She kept him company in the wee hours. She let him know he wasn't alone in possibly fatal situations. She prevented him from falling apart when the stress was about to become too much. She held him close after he witnessed a two-year-old girl's death in the midst of a drug raid. All this she did with only her voice. The bond that had developed between them in those six months was more than friends, more than lovers; it was as strong as any time-honored, trial-tested relationship of trust. And for Blake, it was trust, for she held his life in her hands.

Surprisingly though, Blake had never actually seen the woman behind the voice; neither had any of the numerous others she'd helped. His superior steadfastly refused to divulge her true identity, or a physical description, so Blake and his comrades knew her only as "86" from "Station 20." All of the men he worked with were curious about the elusive 86, but she had become his obsession.

After three weeks of intense searching, he had, at last, found a slim clue to her whereabouts. A janitor who walked her to and from her car every morning and night had finally given into bribery and told him that she helped out at this family-owned convenience store/gas station from nine a.m. until two p.m. on Tuesdays. It had taken him an additional week to summon

enough courage to come face to face with the lady whose voice filled his nights and tormented his days.

As he stood gazing into the cigarette display next to the deli case, Blake had no idea that the very woman he sought was, at the moment, watching him intently from behind a two-way mirror separating the kitchen from the rest of the store. She knew exactly who he was, and why he was there. She only hoped she could fool him as she had the others. Keeping herself completely anonymous, as much as she wanted to do otherwise sometimes, was the only way she could remain effective in her job as the dispatcher for the worst shift in the most thankless job in existence. She watched him for a few minutes longer, then came out to the cash register. Seeing her, he moved over to the front of the counter.

"I'm sorry I took so long. Did you find everything you need?"

Blake hesitated. Was this the woman? She definitely was pretty enough to be the one, but there was something about her voice that wasn't quite right. Should he ask about her? "Well, not exactly."

"What were you looking for? Maybe I can help you."

"Actually, it's not a 'what,' it's a 'who.'"

"Oh, I see."

"I'm looking for a lady who's supposed to work here today."

"There's no one here but me."

"You *may* be her. See, the only things I know for sure about her are that she is an

eight-to-five dispatcher for the county sheriff's department, and she goes by the call number '86.' She has the most beautiful voice I have ever heard and I'd very much like to meet her."

The young woman smiled. "Why don't you just go to the dispatcher's office while she's on duty?"

"She's the only female in the entire jail, so she uses the new E-911 set-up to talk to us. She has her own entrance to the control room and the door is bolted shut from the inside after she goes in and is only opened, except in case of emergency, when she's relieved."

"Couldn't you meet her outside after she gets off?"

Blake shook his head. "The men who relieve her use the jail's control room. We aren't allowed anywhere near her while she's on duty, except in emergency cases, and by the time we get off and get back to the jail to check our cars in, she's already gone off her shift."

"If you don't mind my asking, why all the security?"

"Like I said, she's the only female in the entire jail complex, so it's primarily for her protection; plus it also allays wives' fears."

"How did you get the idea to look for her here?"

"I got a tip from someone who saw her leaving that she worked here on Tuesdays from nine until two."

"You mean you don't know her real name, what she looks like, or anything?"

Blake sighed. "No. Our superior de-

mands strict anonymity for her work. The prisoners don't even know she's there. They think she's just one of the jailers playing around."

"I guess that's the best thing. I wish I would help you."

"Me, too. You can help by not repeating any of this."

"Of course not. I'm sorry you came here for nothing."

"Maybe it's just as well. We both probably would have been disappointed." The young woman saw sadness in his eyes. For some unknown reason, she touched his hand.

"You might have been disappointed, but I can tell you, she wouldn't have been."

The sincerity behind the compliment lifted his heart, and he was surprised to find that he wasn't entirely disappointed that he hadn't found the elusive '86' today. "Thanks."

"You're welcome, Sergeant Millhouse."

He looked at her in surprise. "How did you know who I was? I never patrol this far west in the county."

She laughed, reached across the counter, tapped the name tag pinned to his upper left pocket, and read "Sergeant B. Millhouse."

"That does sort of give it away, doesn't it?" he smiled. "Hey, it isn't fair for you to know my name and me not know yours."

"I'm Dana. Dana Hargrove."

"It's nice to meet you, Dana. I wish I could stay longer, but I have to head for work soon. I'd better go."

Dana watched as he walked back to his car. She sighed a mixture of sadness and relief. He was not the first to come looking for the woman known as '86,' nor would he be the last. For the first time in her short career as a police dispatcher, she cursed the job and its demands of keeping her hidden. The iron bond between her and

Sergeant Blake Millhouse was still intact, though. He would never know that he had actually succeeded in locating the mysterious '86' and had even talked to her face to face. He would never know that the pretty gas station attendant he'd so instantly taken a liking to was the owner of the voice that had become his best friend.



Marie Robinson
"Flowers"
Merit Award, 2-D color
Watercolor

Inspiration

by Joy Kitchens

*Out in the desert with a divining rod
Searching for water.
So far, nothing but dust.
The sun beams down.
Sweat beads form.
Desperation overshadows.
I'm dying for some fresh, clear water.*

Larry Akers
"Tempest"
Merit Award



Is that my Knight in Shining Armor or is the Sun in my Eyes?

by Bonnie Taylor

Once upon a time . . . Cinderella met Prince Charming and they lived happily ever after . . . Sleeping Beauty was rescued by the Prince and they lived happily every after . . . Snow White was awakened with a kiss from the Prince and T.L.H.E.A. . . . Rapunzel was rescued by the Prince and T.L.H.E.A. . . . and on and on. Notice how they all live happily ever after? No fights, no kids, no jobs, or in-laws to contend with, just happily ever after. But what happens when the "after" actually comes? Did Cinderella roll over the next morning to see her Prince in all of his splendor? His jaw hanging slackly and a faint snore rattling in the cold morning air? Or did the Prince ever wake before Sleeping to be horrified by her lack of make-up and disappearance of carefully coiffured hair? Imagine this scene: Snow White and the Prince awaken from their sweet slumber to smile sleepily at each other just in time to hear Sissy and Bobby start another screaming session over what cartoon to watch! In reality, there is no Happily Ever After. There is an as-good-as-can-be-expected-Ever After, a somewhat satisfied Ever After, or even a what-did-you-expect-when-you-married-him-(or her) Ever After.



46 Lights & Shadows 1993

First Place High School Poetry
Leah Augustine
Bradshaw High School

My Bridge

He left me,
A victim of tuberculosis.
Alone with six children to feed
and not a dime.

He left me.
I had to make a living,
Learn a quick trade.
I had no time.

He left me.
A photographer from New York City,
taught me to capture images.
I survived and learned to do the giving.



He left me.
I was strong.
Unlike the other women of my time,
I raised the family and made a living.

He left me.
Then I left with him.
Leaving behind my slides of staring images,
Ghosts of the past.

I left you,
My great-great-great granddaughter,
the slides to gather and treasure
So my history will always last.

I left you
A puzzle spanning a hundred years long.
Take these pieces and carefully place them together
To develop between you and me a bridge strong.

*First Place High School Short Story
Jessica Bowling
East Lawrence High School*

The Mysterious Legend of Oak Ridge ==

It was a hot summer day in July. The wind blew slightly, but did not stir the sweltering heat of the high noon hour. The clouds drifted oh-so-carelessly in the sky. The birds chirped playfully in the oak trees nearby, and the fish jumped and tumbled in the rippling pond. It was a perfect day for swimming, a perfect day for cuddling upon the beach with a piña colada, or better yet, a perfect day for cuddling upon the beach with Kevin Costner—either one would do just fine—personally, Mel Gibson would be a ...

"Lynn, get to work over here and help me chop these weeds! The group from Marion County is going to be here any minute, and this place looks like a giant grasshopper has devoured the grass in sections! What have I always told you? Even it out! Even it out!"

The screams of my so-called "boss" shattered my developing daydream. I began swinging the bushwhacker back

and forth, back and forth, until I discovered three blisters festering on my left hand. I decided it was time for a water break.

I enjoyed my job at the Indian Ceremonial Grounds of Lauderdale County. It was a state-funded youth leadership project in which eight high school youth of the county would work on the development of the new park. It was even supervised by a youth of college age. Basically, the idea was to see which teenager collapsed from overexertion and heat exhaustion the fastest.

That particular day, we were landscaping and mowing on the park's huge ceremonial Indian mound. We were responsible for giving a certain youth group of Marion County a tour of the park that day. Not much was there at the time—only a 500-foot-in-diameter, 12-foot-high ceremonial mound; a small, yet 20-foot-high burial mound; and a pond, all of which were sur-

rounded by tall sagegrass and cotton fields. Plans for the development of an Indian museum, amphitheater, and an authentic Cherokee Indian village were in the works, but for now, our job was to maintain the park's present "facilities."

My friend Nichole and I sat down on the tailgate of Evan's big black GMC four wheel drive truck and gulped down the lukewarm water. Sweat trickled down our faces, backs, and legs while we rested in the shade. Danielle and Joseph soon joined us, followed by the rest of the crew: Harvy, Angela, Mikey, Evan and our youth supervisor, Traca. We gossiped and gulped in a continuous sort of pattern until our big bosses, Louie and R.B., came over and ordered us back to our endless toiling and suffering.

While hoeing at an annoying patch of dandelions, I noticed Nichole gazing over to the east, toward the burial mound. On top of the burial mound were huge, ancient trees which swayed in the breeze. There was always a cool breeze blowing on top of that certain mound, even in 100-degree weather. A peaceful, almost calm, feeling is guaranteed to accompany the breeze. When one is on that mound, nothing bad can happen. It is like being on top of the world in a serene daze.

Every youth working the program had to be of Indian descent, but Nichole's Indian roots run deeper than just her blood. They run through her

soul, her spirit. She possesses a certain knowledge of the unknown. She is a decipherer of the spirit world which was passed down through her Indian ancestry. To her, this is not just a summer job; this is her way of paying her respects to her ancestors who toiled over the rough and rocky land. This job holds her connections to her roots, the last link in her chain of identity, the missing piece of her puzzle. This job is important to her for meaning, not money.

"He's here. I can feel him," Nichole chanted.

The wind suddenly picked up, tousling her sandy mane away from her forehead. She shook her head and snapped out of her trance-like stage.

"What on earth are you talking about?" I asked.

She turned and faced me. "You'll see," and she started chopping again.

It was around 7:00 p.m. when the kids from Marion County finally showed up. Their bus had broken down, and the kids were late. The whole group was cranky, tired and uninterested in the whole place. We divided the kids up and conducted separate tours and then met up at the base of the burial mound. From there, we trudged to the middle of the open sagegrass field and sat Indian-style toward the setting sun. It was there that Nichole's prediction came true.

Danielle began telling the group about the old legend of Oak Ridge

Pond. It is said that a city used to stand where the pond sits now, but the city "sank" due to some pigs uprooting an underground spring. But there is also an underlying, spookier side to the legend. It was then that Danielle turned the story over to Evan, who meekly dictated the story in his own shy manner.

"The City of Oak Ridge was notorious for its bars and saloons," Evan started slowly. "Well, one day, Chief Roshakwaca, of the nearby band of Cherokees, stepped into one of the saloons. Wild drinking, card playing, and thick smoke covered the entire bar. Chief Roshakwaca sat down at the bar and asked for a drink. The bartender didn't take too kindly to Native Americans and asked the chief, in a very loud and obnoxious way, to leave. The chief was deeply offended, but solemnly stood up to go. He was quietly walking toward the exit, when a redneck farmer took a chair and broke it over the chief's back, for no apparent reason. The whole bar, which was full of Indian-haters, ganged up on the chief and beat him to a bloody pulp. As he was dying, the chief sputtered a few words of the Cherokee language and lay back down on the floor. A translator at the scene said that Chief Roshakwaca had condemned the town to sinking.

"Sure enough, the next day, mud came up to the tops of the building windows. Townspeople were trapped, screaming and drowning in mud and

filthy water. The chief had meant what he said. Indians usually do," Evan finished with a quirky grin.

"I've been doing some research," Angela spoke up, "and it seems that today is the 200th anniversary of Oak Ridge's mysterious sinking."

Suddenly, wind roared, lightning flashed, and thunder rolled, even though there was not a cloud in the sky. It was as if the sky were ripping apart. Horrendous throbbing noises pierced everyone's ears as they looked up toward the smoky gray sky. Then we saw it, looming terribly amidst the blackness and electric lightning. Surely it was a mirage, an hallucination. It was a gigantic Indian, in full regalia. He glared at both youth groups and then whizzed away.

Just as fast as it had appeared, it disappeared. We could hardly believe our eyes, but it was real! Nichole was right—he came and "he" was the terrible ghost of Chief Roshakwaca. Our guess was that he came to commemorate the anniversary of his curse.

After that evening, I began to take my job more seriously. I also began to view my ancestry in a different light. I understand myself more so now than I did before the "ghost" appearance. The Indian mounds of Lauderdale County will remain as a physical reminder of my spiritual experiences within myself. Goodness—all of this just from a summer job!

First Place High School Essay
Lee Kent
Bradshaw High School

Dilatory Deductions

In today's microwave, cellular, fast-food society, people must plan their lives with split-second timing combined with hair-splitting precision. Students choose their careers in kindergarten, their every action leading up to that special moment when they receive their high school diploma, so that they might prepare themselves for a life of specialization and detail. Collegians harrow away innumerable hours, gaining complex degrees which devote their proprietors to indentured lives ranging anywhere from arteriography to zinjantropology. I, like most other forward-thinking adolescents, have already chosen my career. I have set idealistic goals for myself and have tried, to the best of my ability, to familiarize myself with the subjects necessary to enter this field.

More than any other subject, biology fascinates me with its logical pertinence and humanity, and I would en-

joy studying it more thoroughly. I feel that I could serve the world most efficiently as a physician, possibly a specialist. I hope to lead a venture to lower the cost of health care, which is not available to thousands of people because of the greed deteriorating the medical profession. I also dream of purifying medicine by enacting stricter standards of ethics among doctors, requiring a mandatory legitimacy hearing before a malpractice complaint may be filed as a lawsuit, and standardizing the cost of drugs and medical services in order to weed out those doctors practicing solely for monetary rewards as well as to insure an army of well-educated, level-headed and inspired physicians who are ready to combat misfortune at a moment's notice, regardless of the economic status of the patient.

I want to save the world. I want to join the Peace Corps and travel to Guam,

Nepal, or Zimbabwe, teaching the people how to grow food and appreciate personal hygiene while I learn their native culture. I want to create programs that will reward people when they recycle, such as the lottery machine in France which accepts cans instead of quarters. I want to educate people, especially those affiliated with industry, about the grave danger of polluting our environment. I want to make everyone receiving over two million dollars per year in net income tithe ten percent which will be invested in education to fund programs of sanitation, inspiration, programs that combat the play pen/baby sitter attitude of public school secondary education.

After I reform the medical profession, elevate the entire world's standard of living to that of modern Switzerland; develop innovative techniques that both prevent any further pollution, and cleanse those already in existence; renovate the American mentality to accept education as a valuable asset; discover an injection that cures cancer, AIDS, the common cold, and the violent aspect of human personality with no pain, I will retire to my commune in Tahiti where I will think all day in my L. L. Bean hammock, sipping peach nectar and listening to Jimmy Buffet. I will read every book I can find, thanks to my "How to Learn to Speed Read and Remember" video tape narrated by John Ritter. There, I will discover the meaning of life and die peacefully in

my sleep having my body donated to science.

"My cousin fell down the stairs and turned her knee inside out. Her knee cap is upside down!"

"I'm sor....Ahhhhhck!"

"She said she heard something snap really loud and she looked down and her leg was just dangling there. She's having surgery on it next Tuesday."

"Shh, I don't want to hear this!"

"They're going to put pins in it and she'll be able to stick a magnet to it and everything!"

"Shut up!"

"But until then, she has to live with it inside out. She's got a wheelchair and everything, but she's not supposed to get out of her bed unless she has to."

"Stop it! I can't feel my legs! I'm paralyzed."

"She said it was kind of purplish all over and she can't even wiggle her toes."

"If you don't stop, I'm going to vomit!"

"You'll never be a doctor if you act like that over a simple upside-down patella!"

I can't be a doctor when I can't even think about knee injuries. Open heart surgery doesn't bother me, as long as I don't have to think about knees and elbows while doing it. I'll never be able to gain trust among my fellow health care professionals if I can't perform a simple knee surgery. They will mock my attempts at reform and boycott my

programs.

But what if I don't get that far? I will go through college as a pre-med major, spending every last dime of my parents' money, enter medical school, enter my first human physiology lab, and run out of the room in terror when the professor asks us to look at the cadaver's knee.

I might not be able to afford college. If I don't get a scholarship, my parents might not be able to pay for expensive schools like the ones I have chosen. My father might lose his job because of the current recession, and force me to drop out of college and work in a coal mine.

I might be accepted to college on a full-tuition scholarship and fail. College work might be too difficult for me. College professors will not allow me to turn my papers in late. Maybe I should have studied a little harder in my high school physics class so I will understand the college physics classes which I must have in order to be accepted to medical school.

I can't save the world because I am just a silly teenager, born and raised in Florence, Alabama, who never turns her work in on time, never studies for her physics tests, never uses her time wisely, and never even buys non-aero-

sol hair spray. I can't save the medical profession because educated doctors will never listen to a med-school dropout. I can't change the entire world's standard of living because I've never been outside the continental United States, and I probably never will. I can't force Americans to educate their children wisely because they're too preoccupied with step-aerobics and rocket-launchers. I can't cure cancer because the vaccine is probably hidden just underneath the patella.

Recently, I had a phone conversation similar to the aforementioned one, in which a friend jokingly told me that I will never succeed at the profession in which I am so keenly interested. Unknowingly, he annihilated my aspirations. This casual remark made me realize the loftiness of my dreams and consider what would become of me if what was supposed to happen didn't. I was disappointed with the comprehension that I had set my goals a little too high, and that no one could do all of the things I wanted to do. I decided that I need to enjoy my life more and stop worrying about whether I succeed in fulfilling my dreams. Even if I had the power to change things, I'd probably do it three days late.

Credits

Production Credits

Art Editor
Vicki Thompson

Literary Editor
Laura Gray

Assistant Literary Editor
Greg Watson

Student Photographer
John Cahoon

Page Layout Design
Vicki Thompson

Desktop Publishing Pasteup
Vicki Thompson

Cover Design
Vicki Thompson

Publications Director
Mary Beth Eck

English Faculty Advisor
Lynne Butler

Art Faculty Advisor
Ron Shady

University Photographer
Shannon Wells

Proofreader
Brenda J. Hill

Compositor
Margie Beck

Art Winners

Best of Show

Jonathan Cain WILKOMMEN ZU BIRKENAU

First Place 2-D Black & White

Theresa Noe 121 SQUARES

Second Place 2-D Black & White

Jeanne Compton ... STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN

First Place 2-D Color

Jeff Williams SPACE

Second Place 2-D Color

Elizabeth Richcreek FALLEN ANGEL

First Place 3-D

Jonathan Cain POPPY VASE

Second Place 3-D

Jonathan Cain ABOVE HOPE
BELOW ANGUISH

Campus Bookstore Award

Jonathan Cain THEY TOLD ME MY EYES
WERE SUNFLOWERS

Merit Awards

Theresa Noe SELF-PORTRAIT

Elizabeth Richcreek SMOKE

Margaret Walter STEEL ETC.

Sandi Stevens THREE DANCERS

Larry Akers TEMPEST

Elizabeth Richcreek FLOWER GARDEN

Marie Robinson FLOWERS

David Strachan PORTRAIT

David Strachan TATTERED

Brentwood Reid STILL LIFE WITH SKULLS

Literary Winners

Informal Essay

First Place

Laura Gray THREE WHEELS

Second Place

Patricia Bryant Hartley CLICK CLICK CLICK

Third Place

Joy Kitchens STEALIE BOYS

Poetry

First Place

Laura Gray THIN MINTS

Second Place

Laura Gray SUPERMARKET

Third Place

Tracy OsbornTOURWAY AT TWO A.M.

Dawn McCurley McInnish MAE JEAN

High School Literary Winners

Short Story (Fiction)

First Place

Jessica Bowling THE MYSTERIOUS LEGEND
OF OAK RIDGE

Instructor: Anita Bowling

Informal Essay

First Place

Lee Kent DILATORY DEDUCTIONS

Instructor: Sandra C. Murray

Poetry

First Place

Leah Augustine MY BRIDGE

Instructor: Rosemary Lewey

Judges

Art Judge

Allen Tomlinson graduated from Auburn University with a B.A. in Public Relations. For seven years he worked for Martin Industries, Inc., as Manager of Advertising and Public Relations. In 1990 he started A. Tomlinson Advertising, Inc., with a staff of people providing the graphic design, marketing, advertising and public relations services. He commented, "I have long been impressed with the talent I see coming from UNA, and this show, although it is made up not just of art students, confirms to me the fact that our area contains talent that can hold its own anywhere in the country."

Literary Judge

Jeanie Thompson is the Marketing Director for Instructional Programs for the University of Alabama College of Continuing Studies. Ms. Thompson has published *How to Enter the River*, Holy Cow! Press, as well as three chapbooks of poetry. Ms. Thompson was one of the featured writers at the UNA Writer's Conference in 1986. Of the work submitted Ms. Thompson commented that it all showed great "care and work."



SINCE 1830

*Manuscripts and art for **Lights and Shadows** magazine
are submitted by the English Club of the Department of English
and art classes of the Department of Art of the University of North Alabama.
These departments sponsor creative writing and art competitions annually.
The 1992-1993 contest winners are identified throughout this publication.*

*Winning manuscripts are also included from the High School Writing Competition,
sponsored by the UNA English Department.*

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICIES It is the policy of the University of North Alabama to afford equal opportunities in education and in employment to qualified persons regardless of age, color, creed, disability, national origin, race, religion, or sex, in accordance with all laws, including Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act, Civil Rights Act of 1991, and Executive Order 11246. The coordinators for nondiscrimination policies are for students, Dr. Thomas M. Lovett, Vice President for Student Affairs and University Counsel, Room 217, Bibb Graves Hall or telephone 205-760-4235 and for employees, Mr. Robert Steen, Director of Human Resources and Affirmative Action, Room 222, Bibb Graves Hall or telephone 205-760-4291.
